

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 01123 281718Z

21

ACTION SSM-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 AID-05 SAB-01 SAM-01 /070 W

----- 068208

R 281447Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9585

INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CAIRO 1123

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR, EG, US

SUBJECT: PRESS INTEREST IN SINAI FIELD MISSION

1. EMBASSY IS RECEIVING GROWING VOLUME OF PRESS QUERIES (MAINLY EGYPTIAN, BUT ALSO AMERICAN) ABOUT SINAI FIELD MISSION. UNDERLYING SOME OF JOURNALISTS' QUESTIONS IS PERCEPTION THAT VIRTUALLY ALL ACTIVITIES RELATING TO SFM ARE BEING CONDUCTED THROUGH ISRAEL. WE HAVE RESPONDED TO QUERIES BY STATING THAT EMBASSY NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED WITH SFM AND ONLY SSM AND SFM DIRECTORS ARE RESPONSIBLE SOURCES FOR INFORMATION ON PROGRESS OF SFM.

2. COMMENT: WE ARE CONCERNED THAT ABSENCE OF SFM ACTIVITY IN EGYPT AND PAUCITY OF NEWS AVAILABLE HERE (DEPT PRESS RELEASE OF JANUARY 16 IS ONLY RELEASE USIS HAS DISTRIBUTED) COULD LEAD TO INACCURATE ACCOUNTS FROM SECONDARY SOURCE AND EVEN SOME ADVERSE COMMENT ABOUT LACK OF "SYMMETRY" AT THIS STAGE.

3. IN ORDER TO AVOID POSSIBLY ADVERSE REPORTING, WE RECOMMEND THAT SFM DIRECTOR THORNE HOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE IN CAIRO DURING HIS FORTHCOMING VISIT. BEST DATE WOULD BE FEBRUARY 5 OR 7 (AMERICAN ASTRONAUTS

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PAGE 02 CAIRO 01123 281718Z

HAVE PRESS CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FEBRUARY 6). IN

ORDER TO AVOID RECRIMINATIONS, WE WOULD PREFER TO
ISSUE INVITATIONS TO ALL MAJOR PAPERS RATHER THEN INVITE
A SELECTED FEW.

4. IF THORNE AGREEABLE, WE WOULD WANT TO INFORM GOE
TO ENSURE IT HAS NO OBJECTION.
EILTS

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Disposition Authority: morefirh
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